In Varietate Concordia: Europe's Catholic Non-Identity

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Abstract
Is theology's contribution to the debate on Europe necessarily particular and therefore an expression of Europe's diversity rather than of its unity? This paper proposes that the theological concept of catholicity could contribute to the conversation about Europe's unity in diversity. This theological view does not necessarily lead to the exclusivist language in the way that the discourse on the Christian identity of Europe usually does. Rather, 'catholicity' offers a theological model for Europe that could be understood as being both dynamically universal and invitingly inclusive, and therefore in line with the idea and ideal of Europe, especially in this time and age of secularism and religious pluralism. First, the concept of catholicity and its potential as a principle of performing dynamic and Eucharistic relationships is explored. Then, a sketch follows of what a performative political theology for Europe might look like by means of a catholic view of synodality. After that, it is shown how this could contribute theologically, rather than procedurally to the debate on the idea of Europe and its current crisis. A catholic view of Europe's identity, this paper claims, will entail that Europe has to let go of its identity, in order to become fully catholic.

Key-Words
Catholicity, Synodality, Europe, Christian identity, Performativity, Political theology

1. Introduction

The current political crisis in Europe is caused by a complex of factors – social, cultural, religious, economic, and ecological. The failure to politically respond to these factors could be viewed as the defeat of the European vision of in varietate concordia, unity in diversity (Zaborowski 2019). This vision did not result in a convincing consensus, or even a precarious balance supporting a functioning European political system. Rather, it became a weakening construction, constantly threatening to collapse, in need of support and shoring up, which seems to have become its main performance. One of the results has been a binary, and often conflicted understanding of the dynamics of unity and diversity, a zero-sum balance determined by degree, in which one aspect is inversely proportional to the other. That balance is now a constant battle, subject to procedure rather than principle, and a matter of strategy rather than structure. Unity in diversity has become the rare and temporary result of laborious negotiations instead of being the starting point for reflections on a common ground or

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a shared trust. In order to counter its defeat, a new understanding of unity in diversity is needed, if it were to avoid ending up as a narrative tool for window dressing a pragmatist dealing with plurality and division.

How could theologians contribute to the conversation on the European idea of unity in diversity? There are political leaders, like the Hungarian prime minster Victor Orbán, or church leaders, like the Archbishop of Budapest, Péter Erdö, who argue for a strong Christian or Catholic identity of Europe. This rhetoric, however, adds to the failure of Europe's ideal, because it tends to be divisive and exclusive, and in their case it certainly is. Does this mean that all religious views of unity are inherently exclusive? Is theology's contribution to the debate on Europe, with its secular culture that increasingly becomes dominant in several countries, necessarily particular and therefore an expression of Europe's diversity rather than of its unity? In this paper, I would like to propose that the theological concept of catholicity could contribute to the conversation about Europe's unity in diversity. I will argue that this concept does not lead to the exclusivist language in the way that the discourse on the Christian identity of Europe usually does. Rather, 'catholicity' offers a theological model for Europe that could be understood as being both dynamically universal and invitingly inclusive, and therefore in line with the idea and ideal of Europe, especially in this time and age of secularism and religious pluralism.

In what follows, I will define the concept of catholicity and explore its potential as a principle of performing dynamic and Eucharistic relationships. Then, I will sketch what a performative political theology for Europe might look like by means of a catholic view of synodality. After that, I will show how this could contribute theologically, rather than procedurally to the debate on the idea of Europe and its current crisis. A catholic view of Europe's identity, I will argue, will entail that Europe has to let go of its identity, in order to become fully catholic.

2. *Catholicity: Plurality, Eucharist, Solidarity*

Like the idea of Europe, the catholicity of the Church has often been described as unitas in diversitate. During the last few decades, reflections on the theology of catholicity have shown that the catholic concept of unity is not one of sheer universality, nor of uniformity (Dulles 1985). Instead, it implies a relationship among things that are diverse, a dynamic that, according to Avery Dulles, "designates a fullness of reality and life, especially divine life, actively communicating itself" (Dulles 1985: 167-168). The catholicity of the Church is therefore regarded by him as shaped by a diver-

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sity of participations in the divine catholicity. So, this theological view of catholicity seems to be a combination of divine self-communication on the one hand and the various participations in that divine communication on the other. In both instances, catholicity is a performance: of God, in and through particular moments in the history of salvation, and of the Church in its variety of forms and engagements.

2.1. Catholicity: Defining a Dynamic Unity

The term 'catholic' comes from the Greek roots kata and holos, together forming kath'holou, which means according to, concerning, or through the whole. Ancient Greek writers used the adjective katholikos, and the noun katholikon, to talk about what is universal or most general. So, there are treatises on the universals, ta katholikè, which may be instantiated by particular realities in various ways, depending on one's philosophy. In his recent work on revelation, Balázs Mezei points at the pre-position kata, which as a conjunction can have several meanings and denote something rather more dynamic: with a genitive noun, as in kath'holou the main sense is downward motion, down in the whole, or immersed in the whole; it can also mean along, or following, so along or following the whole, and it can also mean towards or even against – as in Irenaeus' Adversus Haereses: kata hairesen – (Mezei 2019: 299-304).[1] It will prove to be difficult to include all these senses in a particular use of the concept, but at least it makes clear that the meaning of catholicity is a dynamic combination characterized by relation and movement rather than that it signifies a static or complete idea. It seems to be a quality on the move, a questing, dynamic, active quality which should engage all aspects of life.[2]

Employing the term 'catholicity' in a European context could easily lead to misunderstandings motivated by matters of identity, and especially by the concern of exclusivism. Such misunderstandings are usually caused by confusing the quantitative and qualitative understandings of the term.[3]

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1 Cf. David C. Schindler, *The Catholicity of Reason* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013, 9.

2 For an introduction into the concept of catholicity, see Philip McCosker, "Catholicity: Its Varieties and Futures," Lecture for the Von Hügel Institute for Critical Inquiry, 1 March 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pf7iDedGWho>, [Last accessed 5 March 2021].

3 The distinction between quantitative and qualitative understandings of catholicity has been clearly explained by Hans Urs von Balthasar, "The Claim to Catholicity,"

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The quantitative understanding emphasises the geographical, temporal and numerical extension of institutional Catholicism. The qualitative understanding focuses on ideas of fullness or holism, whether they be doctrinal, sacramental or eschatological. Understanding the term 'catholicity' in the ultimately quantitative sense of universal, which is quite a frequent temptation, can lead to a static, totalizing, and exclusive sense of the term. Not for nothing has Vincent of Lérins' apologetic understanding of catholic truth – as that which is held everywhere, always and by everyone – been contested.

It is interesting, as the Jesuit Walter Ong has noted, that the Western church did not – despite having the perfectly good Latin adjective universalis in its lexicon – by and large use the Latinate term in its early documents, preferring instead to transliterate the more unusual Greek term, katholikos, into Roman script. As Ong points out, the etymology of universalis is also clear, coming from the Latin roots unum, or one, and vertere, to turn, so to turn into one (Ong 1990: 347). There is therefore a clear undercurrent in that term tending towards uniformity. However, it is incontrovertible that if that were the sense of catholic, then the Roman Catholic Church, let alone any other ecclesial body, is not and has never been catholic. Consequently, it seems that the qualitative path is more promising to explore, with special attention paid to the sense of dynamism in the act of 'turning', which could be seen as a performative and transformative quality of an event or act.

2.2. Unity as Communion: Plurality and Equality within the Church

The performative dimension of catholicity is perhaps best expressed as 'unity as communion', which is central to it, and could prove to be helpful for envisioning a dynamic model for thinking Europe's unity. So what does the catholic idea of 'unity as communion' signify, and how could it enrich a model of performative politics in Europe?

Wolfgang Beinert affirmed that communion is a model of social life that manifests the idea of catholicity. The catholic way of perceiving unity, he argues, does not favour a vertical unity in which "unity is valued above all", but rather "a multiple figure of unity", whereby "each organ is called to fulfil its irreducible and original function within the whole."

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in Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Spirit and Institution: Explorations in Theology IV* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1995), 65-121.

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(Beinert 1992: 470-471) Beinert seems to suggest that a catholic model of unity manifests itself when the diversity of the constitutive elements is recognized and accommodated, and when their distinctiveness is faithfully preserved. In this catholic model of unity, he argues, "the plurality of organs maintained intact in the harmony of the organism." (Beinert 1992: 471)

In the literature on the concept of catholicity, a stress on diversity and plurality is often accompanied with a trinitarian foundation. Richard Gaillardetz, for example, regards 'unity as communion' as an implication of the trinitarian root of the catholicity of the Church: "An ecclesiology attuned to ancient trinitarian convictions had to affirm that church unity, if grounded in the triune life of God, could not be based in a stifling uniformity but should rather affirm unity as communion." (Gaillardetz 2008: 88) This affirmation informs the model of catholicity as performance. It not only demands a passive confirmation of the distinct persons in the Trinity, but also of the active performance of their interrelatedness. Beinert claims that in the mystery of the Trinity, distinction and mutual relationship are well maintained. According to him, the immanent Trinity is perfect communion (communio) in perfect communication (communicatio) (Beinert 1992: 467).[4] Avery Dulles also writes that the doctrine of the Trinity could clarify that God's unity is not static and monotonous, but consists in a dynamic interaction, and that the practice of catholicity is analogous to this dynamic of a differentiated trinitarian unity (Dulles 1985: 31).[5] Analogously, a communion model of unity should therefore not be uniform but demands performance, for it depends on the complex interactions of its diverse constitutive elements.

2.2.1. Eucharistic Performance: Universal Solidarity beyond the Church

This catholic performance has the Eucharist at its heart, a sacrament of unity with God but also with one another (Rush 2017: 319). Political theologian William Cavanaugh writes that

4 For Beinert, the fundamental attribute of God as love (1 John 4:8) is of great importance. "Love is the desire for unity of those who are distinct," writes Beinert, "and the realization of communion in a perfect exchange while at the same time maintaining the identity of those who love."

5 Another term that Dulles uses is 'diversified unity', Dulles, *The Catholicity of the Church*, 42; Gaillardetz, *Ecclesiology for a Global Church*, 35, 88.

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The Eucharist aims at the building of the Body of Christ which is not simply centripetal; we are united not just to God as to the centre but to one another. This is no liberal body, in which the centre seeks to maintain the independence of individuals from each other, nor a fascist body, which seeks to bind individuals to each other through a centre. Christ is indeed the Head of the Body, but the members do not relate to one another through the Head alone, for Christ Himself is found not only in the centre but at the margins of the Body, radically identified with the 'least of my brothers and sisters' (Matt. 25. 31-46), with whom all the members suffer and rejoice together (1 Cor. 12.26) (Cavanaugh 2002: 49).

The unity of all humanity enacted by the Eucharist, merits further consideration. It should be noted that such a unity is inclusive for it is not confined to the unity among fellow participants of the Eucharist alone, but rather embraces all humanity. In the words of Cavanaugh, "the Church in the Eucharistic gathering is the sacrament of the gathering of all humanity, but that gathering is not limited to the institutional Church itself" (Cavanaugh 2014: 397).

The document Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church echoes the same spirit of inclusion, albeit with a somewhat different emphasis, as it denotes the universal unity of human beings as the fruit of the Eucharistic communion. The spirituality of communion, the document insists, contains "the awareness of being members of each other as the Body of Christ and of being sent to our brothers and sisters, first and foremost to the poorest and the most excluded." (International Theological Comission: 108). In short, those who are united as a Body in Christ in turn are sent to build up unity with all humanity, in which care for the lowest in society is of primary concern.

This line of thought indicates that solidarity is one of the constitutive elements of the Eucharistic communion. The unity of all human beings is celebrated sacramentally in the Eucharist, a sign and instrument of universal solidarity. In order to manifest this universality, the Eucharist demands a certain type of performance in order to enact its diversity and inclusivity. Because, although it gathers everyone within the boundary of the Eucharist, by virtue of that boundary it could also lead to the exclusion of whoever falls outside the universality of the communion it constitutes. The aim of the eucharistic performance therefore needs to be understood in a catholic way, because the catholic quality of 'throughout-the-whole' carries no notion of boundary that demarcate those who are 'in' and those who are 'out' (Horan 2012).

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3. Polycentrism and Dispute as Catholic Performances

How could this dynamic concept of catholicity inform a model of governance? It is clear that a collaborative process is central to the concept of synodality, which encourages unity while recognizing and building on contextual differences. This model of unity does not lead to uniformity and centralization, but rather promotes pluriformity and decentralization, and in this way it could challenge an all too uniform model of Europe.

3.1. Decentralization: Polycentrism and the Polyhedron

Bradford Hinze connects the ecclesial idea of synodality with the concept of polycentrism, to which decentralization is a key concept. This, of course, challenges the idea of catholicity as having one centre that warrant the uniformity of governance and doctrine. Hinze conceives Pope Francis's synodal Church as "the primary vehicle for his program of promoting a 'healthy decentralization' in the Church and a polycentric approach to the Church's universality – polyhedron in his own idiom" (Hinze 2020: 217).[6] The vision of a healthy decentralization and polycentric approach suggests that the decision-making takes place at the local level as much as possible,[7] hence the decision on a matter can vary from one context to the other. Nevertheless, this is not to say that a synodal way is just another form of relativism. Ormond Rush offers a strong argument on this matter and argued that [it] is not to be cheaply dismissed as some 'situation ethics' or just one more example of the 'dictatorship of relativism' but rather a deep theological affirmation, grounded in the New Testament and the tradition

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6 Cf. Faggioli, "From Collegiality to Synodality," 2; Cf. Rush, "Inverting the Pyramid," 324. According to Pope Francis, the polyhedron model, which he considers most fitting for pastoral and political activities, "reflects the convergence of all its parts, each of which preserves its distinctiveness." The polyhedron model, therefore, is opposed to the sphere model, in which "every point is equidistant from the center, and there are no differences between them." Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 236.

7 This is a revival of an ecclesial custom in the early Church. In his elucidation of the relationship of the local Churches and universal Church in the early Christianity, Gaillardetz states: "The default assumption of early Christianity was that most church issues where to be dealt with at the local level, and only when issues clearly had consequences for the broader community […] were decisions to be made by representative gatherings of religions churches (synods)." Gaillardetz, *Ecclesiology for a Global Church* (New York: Orbis Books, 2008), 86.

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of the church concerning the activity of the Holy Spirit whose enlightenment brings about understanding, interpretation, and application of the Christian Gospel in the realities of life in sinful, yet grace-filled and often selflessly loving, human lives – down in the valley, in their particular situation. (Rush 2017: 170)

Furthermore, a polycentric approach allows the Church to reach those with specific needs, namely those who have been often marginalized. According to Bradford Hinze, it is also an expression of synodal spirit that encourages Pope Francis to reach the people who are marginalized in the Church (Hinze 2020: 217). Massimo Faggioli likewise notes that "synodality is the foundation to Francis's vision of the Church for the poor" (Faggioli 2020: 353). In other words, by virtue of its polycentric approach, a synodal church is able to address the specific needs of those whose interests have been often overlooked and in need for recognition and empowerment. In this way, synodality is not only the way of expressing solidarity, but also a means for realizing the Church's contribution in search of a more just society as an integral part of its catholic performance.

3.2. Dispute as Political Performance: Criticising Unity

This catholic performance, despite its admirable values of solidarity and openness, might however be subject to the same critique as the dominant liberal paradigms such as those developed by John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas. These have been critically questioned by the influential political theories of the French philosopher Jacques Rancière and the Belgian philosopher Chantal Mouffe (Rancière 1995). A consensual democracy for example, as observed by Rancière, is bound to exclude true otherness, diversity and dissent, and is therefore blind to the realities of political struggle and conflict. Rancière believes that the present plea for democracy is not open to a diversity of opinions, and it finds expression in abstract ideals, such as altruism. It offers no room, he argues, for those who are unable to participate in the dominant discourse (Hetzel 2004: 322-326).

Rancière mentions two crucial social developments that have led to this 'end of the political', and he claims that both have to do with a lack of difference between the visible and the invisible: both in the total rule of the opinion polls and in the total rule of the law, every possibility of dissent, and hence of political dispute, disappears. In opinion polls, there is no possibility of disagreement, which makes the demos appear as a unity that is completely transparent and present in itself (Wittmann 2013: 35). According to Rancière, this rule of opinion is linked to the logic of

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modern science, for "opinion research is the science that immediately becomes an opinion", and any opinion that defies that unity is immediately identified as populist (Rancière 2005). A similar "transparency" and also an expression of the abolition of the difference between the visible and the invisible, can be seen in the gradually growing dominance of law over politics. The law itself becomes the instrument of power, governing society with an ever-increasing optimism, thus excluding any political argument or dissent. Again, according to Rancière, the absence of alternatives is the highest commandment given with the need for consensus. In his book La mésentente, the clear and permanent visibility and rule of law infiltrates politics and even replaces it (Rancière 1995: 58ff).

Mouffe also sees the central principle of modern liberal democracy in the pursuit of consensus and criticizes it for being an element that undermines real political democracy. Inspired by Carl Schmitt, Mouffe distances herself from a Habermassian political model, which determines the rational conditions of social communication. Precisely because conflict is excluded, this model enables the emergence of different forms of populism. Populism, according to Mouffe, is essentially nothing more than opposition to the communicative moral consensus and is produced by liberal democracy itself (Mouffe 2005: 50).

At first glance these critiques of liberal democracy seem to be equally valid for the concept of catholicity. Nevertheless, there is also an important similarity between this critique and the catholic idea of unity, because in both positions it is clear that unity cannot be performed in its fullness. Rancière and Mouffe clearly indicate that a political unity is beyond the domain of political philosophy and theory. I however would like to propose how that catholicity presents us with a performative idea of unity, informing a Catholic political theology.

3.3. Catholicity as Coincidentia Oppositorum

Catholicity as political performance is an ambition that may be difficult to achieve, and it might fall in the same trap of universalism that it tries to avoid. At the same time it offers a view of a reality that is everywhere and nowhere and cannot be attached to a particular narrative or set of values shared by all, or a performance that is settled once and for all. It is a reality within the political performances and narratives that are shaped by it, and that can and should be regarded as worthwhile if one is willing to think about the conditions of political performances. Thus, it becomes clear that the criticism of catholicity as a dangerous and therefore failing

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unifying principle, and the description of catholicity as an elusive but real and necessary experience, show two different points of view – the difference between a political-theoretical or a procedural point of view, and a theological point of view that perceives any political relationship as a potential locus theologicus.

A catholic performance expresses an elusive dynamic that precedes the opposition between the world and the actors in it, and in this respect also overcomes the dualism that underlies the dilemmas with which every theology that wishes to move in the world is confronted. In the network of political relations, catholicity is concerned with a multifarious faith, which becomes manifest in the interplay between the political actors and their performances. In this respect, a catholic political theology seems to escape the dilemma of having to ground political theology either fully in a political diversity, or fully in a theological unity.

Perhaps a good illustration of the Catholic political theology I am proposing, can already be found in Nicholas of Cusa's De Concordantia Catholica. In Cusa's day, the concept of catholicity served as a defence of the pragmatic realism of conciliarism. But it could equally serve as a model to tackle the crises in the contemporary European political situation. It would offer much more than the pragmatism of procedural solutions. Its contribution would be the analysis of trust as the foundation of all good governance, a metaphysics that needs to be performed in order to be experienced as already present, or even better, a metaphysics that emerges in political performances, through and in which they form the catholic integration of the political and the theological. It would be inherently political as it proposes to find, in Cusa's terms, a coincidentia oppositorum, without putting into perspective whether this can be achieved, without subscribing to a fixed set of procedures of dialogue or principles of a common rationality, and without claiming that catholicity can only be achieved by acknowledging that opposite views will always remain opposites. It would be theological, as it presents a polyhedron space in which the presence and the will of the unknown God can become manifest, without denying the radical apophatic nature of understanding the infinite and without projecting or forcing a divine or any other kind of centralized law onto an unreconciled situation. Only a catholic Europe in this sense can warrant these withouts, only the performance of these withouts will manifest the catholicity of Europe.

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4. Europe's Catholic Non-Identity

How could the concept of catholicity form a lens for understanding Europe's unity in diversity? Before I return to the concept of catholicity, I will first describe my own view of Christian living, in order to show how it accommodates a catholicity that challenges it as a form of identity. In other words, the concept of catholicity will help us to understand that the Christian faith is not a form of identity, and that it therefore cannot be used as a foundation for Europe's identity either. Catholicity, however, could be used as a contribution to the idea of Europe, but only when it is viewed as a non-identity. Paradoxically, only particular forms of life, such as the Christian in my case but not exclusively so, can manifest this catholicity. Therefore, I will now describe the political consequences of Christian living, in order to show that it is catholic at its core, which defies it becoming a political identity next to others.

A sociologist most probably would answer questions about identity rather differently, but as a theologian, I would argue that what could be described as 'Christian identity' can be found not so much in what they do or what group they belong to, but in the source people are hoping for, for which they believe they exist, and which will bring justice to them and to the world. This does not entail that Christian believers in Europe are on their own to discover and formulate what this source is that constitutes their life. Together with others they find themselves hearing a call to respond to the present situation. That response should be an expression of the desire to participate in the common good, which for Christians is the promised future that is hoped for. Not by ignoring, denying or escaping the present situation, but by contributing to it through the embodiment of the promised good without any reserve. This way, Christians respond with others to a catholic reality that motivates the political performances and narratives that they believe are shaped by it. This is what some Christian theologians call 'ongoing incarnation', a word of faith, which is shaped and represented by following Christ, an embodied performance of trust and risk.

This ongoing incarnation is at the heart of what the apostle Paul writes to the Colossians, when he writes that he rejoices 'in what I am suffering for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church' (Colossians 1,24). By this, he does not mean that the prosecution, the imprisonment, and the torture he endured were a good thing, like according to a specific type of theology Christ's suffering is to be understood as the satisfaction for human sin. His own life of effort and pain does however manifest the

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plausibility to have faith in the Christian message, that in the brokenness of people's lives and in the attempts to atone and heal them, God's glory becomes present, and that it is worthwhile to engage with this hidden presence, even if this entails that the pain and effort will not go away, or even increase. This is according to Saint Paul the mystery that was revealed in the resurrection from the dead of the tortured Jesus, which demands an ongoing response from Christian believers: 'the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord's people. To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory' (Colossians 1,26-27). According to Saint Paul, people are each other's hope, each other's proclaimers of hope, each other's source and home, in which God's work becomes manifest, in the brokenness of our dependency.

This dependency manifests the catholicity as I have described it in this paper, hidden at the heart of how Christians define their so-called 'Christian identity'. It is a universal view, that seeks to include all people of good will, who suffer and struggle, who fail and fall, who conquer and succeed when they strive for the common good. As members of a Body, the community that is the Church, they need each other, and as members of society, they need others. People are each other's hand and foot, eye and ear, heart and head, writes Paul (1 Cor 12,14-26), so that God's glory will reveal itself in all the effort and suffering people experience on the way they walk together, with each other's help and thanks to each other's engagement. Europe's ideal of unity in diversity could be viewed as the response to a universal dependency, rather than as the act of respecting otherness, that it has turned into. European identity is constituted by what it is received from others, rather than by a set of ethical values that we identify for example as 'Christian' or 'Western'. Therefore, I propose it is a non-identity rather than an identity, and the dynamics of catholicity helps us to understand why this is the case.

The concept of a 'Christian identity', therefore, is deeply problematic, because it allows for programmatic uses in which it is rather exclusively defined over against other so-called 'identities', even when their representatives utter particularities of openness towards the other. Instead of living with one particular identity between others, Christians live a life incomplete, which they universally share with others, and as such their identity is governed by a lack and by that which it is not, rather than by a set of recognizable characteristics, however much in flux and free we may want it to be. Instead of reformulating Europe's Christian identity into a particular one besides others, or into a culture of openness and hospitality,

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I propose to reconfirm the universal aspects of a catholic non-identity, that enables us to let go of our so-called identities.

5. Conclusion

The American Trappist monk Thomas Merton spoke about the Christian community as a body of broken bones. To him, this particular body is Christ's body, the body that resurrects in us, and as such, it is this hidden presence of the resurrecting Christ that shapes catholic non-identity. Thomas Merton describes this presence as follows: "Christ is massacred in His members, torn limb from limb; God is murdered in men." (Merton 1949: 71). But precisely here does God's solidarity with humanity become manifest. When Jesus utters the words: My God, why hast Thou forsaken me' at the end of the gospels of Mark (Mk 15,34) and Matthew (Mt 27,46), it is a manifestation of ultimate despair and protest, but also of the ultimate witness that God has become present among the brokenness, and as such is the life source of faith that gives the power against cynicism, lethargy and resignation. A catholic reality dwells in a body of broken bones that does not cease to resurrect against suffering and injustice. This way, it is a model for Europe, or better an inspiration of its political performance. It seeks to heal, not by being an identifiable unity but instead by a call to respond, by its awareness of mutual dependency, its laments and prayers, and its acts of mercy.

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